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the term geography has a decidedly limited meaning. To him it designates little save the distribution of land and sea; he pays almost no heed to questions of relief or climate.

The method of the volume is quite uniform. The geological periods are taken up in chronological sequence. Under each main division the stratigraphical evidence is first treated and numerous descriptions of the rock series are given. Then comes a section devoted to the physical geography of the period, rarely anything more than a description of the probable location of the old shore lines. If faulting or folding has taken place, the exact nature and location of the movements is carefully discussed.

Throughout the volume the reader who is abreast of modern geological thought is apt to feel that there is a good deal of conservatism. For instance, conglomerates are treated as if they were almost universally beach formations, whereas there is a growing body of evidence to show that in many, and perhaps the majority of cases, they are sub-aerial formations laid down in semi-arid regions, or at the base of mountains in more humid districts. In the same way the colors of rocks and their frequent changes in texture are rarely used as aids in determining the climatic or other variations which occurred during deposition. The Triassic period is now supposed by many to have been a time of extensive deserts; nevertheless, the author makes only a bare reference to these new views. Another of the points wherein he holds to the old interpretations is in the matter of peneplains. He considers that most of them are due to submarine erosion.

Other instances of the relatively conservative tone of the volume might be mentioned, but enough has been said to show its general character. Mr. Jukes-Browne is everywhere fair in his statement of the views of those who disagree from him. Almost invariably where two or more theories stand in opposition the one which the author does not accept is at least mentioned. Thus, while the information given is not usually sufficient to enable the reader to judge fully of the merits of the case, he is at least put on his guard. Taken all in all the conservative tone of the book is of small importance, even for the most progressive reader, when compared with the great amount of most valuable information which Mr. Jukes-Browne has so ably collected from a multitude of sources.

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.

La Loire : Étude de Fleuve. Par L. Gallouédec. 347 pp. Maps, ills. Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1910. Fr. 7.50.

Of all the large rivers of France, the Loire is certainly that whose geographical rôle has been most acutely influenced by the changes of historical conditions. As the river which traverses the heart of the country in almost its entire width, it was naturally predetermined to become the main artery of life for that country. In the times of ancient Gaul, when there were no land roads, it was indeed the "moving highway" for the tribes along its banks, but at the same time, owing to the difficulties which the width and the strong currents caused in crossing the river, it acted also as a barrier between those on both banks. At the time of the Roman Conquest, when land travel developed, roads were built as far as waterways were not available; but on reaching the river the road ended and travel continued downstream, even then crossing the river but in exceptional cases.

These two functions of the river, together with the two historical periods, are reflected in the oldest settlements of the Loire valley. The former is repre-

sented by the small harbor towns and villages lined up along the river at short intervals; they indicate the ancient landings of the small craft of old Gaul, and they are always located on the higher bank above high water level. The others are cities of Roman origin, such as Roanne, Digoin, Decize, Nevers, Orléans, Blois, Tours, Nantes, and mark the spots where a Roman highway reached the river. This location made them prosperous; they soon became important centers commercially, politically, and intellectually, so that the mention of some of these names evokes some of the proudest memories of mediæval France. This renders more striking the present aspect of these places in which everything speaks of a grandeur that is past but nothing of the present, and whose most modern piers and warehouses, much too large for the business which they accommodate, date from the eighteenth century.

The explanation of this decay is, that in proportion as land travel improved and increased the drawbacks of this capricious waterway made themselves felt more keenly. Even the discomforts of the mail coach, according to Mme. de Sévigné, seemed more bearable than those of the river, and thus the court left the banks of the Loire for those of the Seine, and passenger and freight traffic, too, gradually deserted it until the advent of the steam cars dealt the last and deadly blow to the sloops.

It is this process of historical development which must be made mainly responsible for the present condition of the Loire country, much more than the pretended deterioration of the waterway itself, which has been much exaggerated. Generally speaking, the river is as good—or as bad—as it ever was; the main trouble is that transportation by land has improved. In competition with the old highways the river could hold its own; it cannot, with modern roads. In recognition of this fact the author has undertaken the meritorious task of working up the existing observations on that river into an all-sided monograph, studying the relief, soil, and climate, of the Loire basin, the course of the river, its water-supply, floods, sands, ices, and the characteristics of its tributaries. In this way he has ascertained that the dangerous and unreliable character of the river is due to natural causes, namely, to the fact that the Loire enjoys, among the rivers of France, the fatal distinction of receiving all its principal tributaries from the same region, the Central Plateau. In other rivers whose tributaries come from various parts of the country and are also better distributed along their courses, a flood or drought in the basin of one of them may be balanced by the opposite condition of another so that neither becomes too great in the main river. But in the case of the Loire all the principal branches act simultaneously in filling or emptying its bed, so that its floods must needs become more devastating, and its shallows more shallow, than those of any other river.

As this condition cannot be allowed to last, the author strongly pleads for a regulation of, at least, the part of the river between Nantes and Orléans or Briare. A navigable waterway of that length, establishing a connection between the 1,100 kilometers of waterways of the Loire system and the great canal system of France, would be the only means to re-awaken that beautiful country from the deadly sleep of its present condition.

MARTHA KRUG GENTHE.

POLAR

Les Expéditions Polaires depuis 1800. Liste des états-majors nautiques et scientifiques. Par Jean Denucé. 159 pp. Index. Imprimerie J. van Hille-de Backer, Anvers, 1911. 10 x 6½.

An expansion and a partial correction of the provisional list of expeditions